

I'm the King of the Castle: The Ending



Most stories you read or films you see have nice, tidy happy endings that bring events to a conclusion that leaves you feeling satisfied and complete. Not so *I'm the King of the Castle*, which ends after Kingshaw has committed suicide with nobody ever noticing the bullying he was subjected to at the hands of Hooper. Of course, this is a deliberate ploy by the author who is trying to get a message across, but what's the message? Answer these questions to try and work it out.

- How does Hooper feel when he discovers that Kingshaw is dead?
- What is Mrs Kingshaw's reaction to her son's suicide?
- Why does Kingshaw drown himself in this particular place?
- Did Kingshaw have a realistic alternative to suicide?
- List the things that had gone wrong for Kingshaw the day before he killed himself
- What do you think could have stopped him?
- What character traits have we already seen in Kingshaw that led him to think he had no alternative?
- How do you think Hooper will be affected by Kingshaw's suicide? List the possible positive and negative effects on him? Do you think he will learn anything from it?
- Why do you think Susan Hill ends the story as she does?
- What does the novel teach us about notions of childhood?

Write a story about what happens next. Consider whether you are writing a story based on what is most likely or what you would like to happen.

OR

Write a diary of the day's events from Hooper's point of view. How will your feelings about Kingshaw, your father, Mrs Kingshaw and yourself be expressed? Remember, the adults don't have a clue that you might be to blame!

OR

Describe Kingshaw's dreams the night before his untimely death. Who else might feature in Kingshaw's dreams after such a harrowing day?